



King County

Countywide Community Forums

An independent Program in the King County Auditor's Office

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Welcome *Citizen Councilors* to the second round of King County's new *Countywide Community Forums*! Again, — it's all about values. Why are values so important for each individual as well as for organizations and society? The reason is that values are like switches on a railroad. As an individual approaches a junction—which is a decision-making point for the individual, organization, or society—the CUMULATIVE effect of ALL the values held AT THAT POINT IN TIME determines the direction taken at the specific junction. These choices, in turn, taken sequentially over time, DETERMINE THE FUTURE and tend to be SELF-FULFILLING because the future of tomorrow is born from the values and decisions of today. "Thus the people are more the creators of their own destiny, rather than the victims of it (Eldon Byrd, Scientist)." That is, the people's *manifest destiny* in a democracy is *CIVILIZATION BUILDING*!

The Opinionnaire[®] survey used in this *values education* process is designed to assist *Citizen Councilors* to share their values with each other, their elected leaders, the news media, and the public at large. *Viewspaper*[®] reports, summarizing the tabulated opinions of all *Citizen Councilors*, will then be posted on our website at: kingcounty.gov/operations/auditor/communityforums. Newspapers get the news out to people; *Viewspaper*[®] reports do the reverse, getting views (opinions) back from the people in *symbolic dialogue*.

The DVD in your packet includes two videos: a five-minute "orientation" video and a twenty minute "budget priorities" video. No attempt is made to inundate you and other *Citizen Councilors* with "all the facts"—that would be impossible. Rather the Countywide Community Forums process assumes that most people, young and old, already possess a wealth of information from many sources, and that by sharing their opinions they help clarify our shared values in the world of ethics—the world of "what ought to be." This world, in the long run through our societal processes, becomes the world of "what is" because our future is created from the values and decisions of today.

We hope this process will help you and your fellow *Citizen Councilors* clarify and share the values you believe will move us toward a fairer, more loving, and sustainable future. **Thank you** for volunteering to serve as an official King County *Citizen Councilor*! Please invite your friends to participate too.

Dick Spady

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P.S. While citizens can enroll and participate as *Citizen Councilors* without cost and the program receives no tax support, there are direct and overhead costs. If you have a connection to a philanthropy or grant source, please let me know. If you can afford it, please mail a check in one of the donation envelopes your host received or visit our website at: **CommunityForums.org**.